

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Examiner's Action dated August 12, 2005. Applicants have amended the claims to clarify features of the claimed invention. Applicants have further incorporated allowable subject matter within several independent claims. No new matter has been added, and the amendments place the claims in better condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments to the claims. The discussion/arguments provided below reference the claims in their amended form.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

At paragraph 5 of the present Office Action, Examiner states that Claims 6-12, 17-18, 26-27 and 30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended several of the independent claims by incorporating therein the allowable subject matter from dependent claims (now canceled).

Applicants have also provided arguments below, which outline the various reasons why the remaining claims are not obvious over the §103 references and are thus allowable. In light of the above amendments and the below arguments, Applicants respectfully request Examiner extend the allowance to cover all pending claims.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

At paragraph 3 of the present Office Action, Claims 1-2, 13-14, 19-23 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Boe, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,276) in view of *Ferguson, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,532,241). At paragraph 4 of the present Office Action, Claims 3-5, 15-16, 24-25 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Boe* in view of *Ferguson* and further in view of *Colby, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,264).

As stated above, several of the above independent claims have been amended to include allowable subject matter therein, rendering the present rejections moots with respect to those independent claims and the claims which depend from them. With respect to the other claims,

namely Claims 1-2 and 3-5, Applicants maintain that the above combinations of references do not render these present claims unpatentable because neither of the combinations suggest to one skilled in the art the subject matter of Applicants' claimed invention as recited by these claims.

As recited by Claim 1, Applicants invention provides a separate access device utilized to select a communication path (among a plurality of available (tabulated) communication paths) to route communication between a SNA client and a SNA server based on a selection from the device's configuration table. Applicants' Figure 3A clearly illustrates the separate access device, and the functionality associated therewith is clearly recited within the specification (*see*, for example, page 16, lines 25 to page 18, line 17; *see also* page 18, line 28 to page 20, line 10, describing the selection of virtual circuits using the configuration files of each server). Figure 5 illustrates an example configuration table.

Clearly, the implementation of the access device and functional features associated therewith are not suggested by any of the references. While the references may generally relate to SNA clients communicating (directly) with SNA servers, none of the references teach or suggest the utilization of a separate physical device (Applicants' access device) that performs the claimed receiving, selecting and forwarding features/functions with the aid of specially created server-configuration table providing multiple communication routes for selection.

Examiner admits that *Boe* does not provide these features. Examiner then relies on *Ferguson's* description of a "host network connection," and Figures 1-4 of *Ferguson*. Applicants have reviewed the reference and find *Ferguson* to be devoid of any suggestion of the utilization of a separate access device to select a communication path to route SNA client communication to a SNA server based on a selection from a configuration table stored within the access device. Figure 6 (632-640) and col. 11 line 58 – col. 13, lines 35 of *Ferguson* describe tables having "protocol-related information associated with a protocol server", where the information may be "information relevant to the VTAM and DLSw... APPN protocol servers" (col. 12, ll 6-20). Nowhere in this description is there any reference of a separate access device with a configuration table for selecting communication routes for SNA client communication to the SNA server(s).

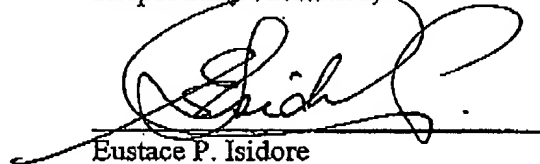
Since the combinations of references ~~do not~~ suggest the above (and other) key features of Applicants' claimed invention, one skilled in the art would not find Applicants' invention unpatentable over either combination. The above claims are therefore allowable over the combinations.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have diligently responded to the Office Action by amending the claims to more clearly recite the novel features of the invention and by incorporating allowable subject matter into several of the independent claims. Applicants have also provided arguments herein which show why the remaining independent claim is not unpatentable over the combinations of references. The amendments and arguments overcome the §103 rejections, and Applicants, therefore, respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for all claims now pending.

Applicants further respectfully request the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney of record at 512.343.6116 if such would further or expedite the prosecution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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